



JOINT CHAIRMEN'S REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2020 OPERATING BUDGET

RMC MANAGING FOR RESULTS MEASURES (JCR PAGE 93)



50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401
Office: 410-841-5772 • Fax: 410-841-5987 • TTY: 800-735-2258
Email: rmc.mda@maryland.gov
Website: www.rural.maryland.gov

Scott Warner, Chairman

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

August 15, 2019

The Honorable Nancy King
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairs King and McIntosh:

We are pleased to present the attached report as requested in the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget Joint Chairmen's Report, Page 93. As per the report, ***"The Fiscal 2020 budget includes \$5.8 million for the Rural Maryland Council to provide grants to improve outcomes in rural communities. However, the Managing for Results (MFR) measures provided with the fiscal 2020 budget submission are too general to reflect any meaningful impact by the Rural Maryland Council's grants. Therefore, the committees requested that the Rural Maryland Council submit a report by September 1, 2019, on input, output, outcome, and efficiency measures that show the direct connection between the funding that it provides in grants and the improvement in quality of life in rural communities."***

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) brings together citizens, community-based organizations, federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to collectively address the needs of Rural Maryland. The RMC is an independent state agency located within the Maryland Department of Agriculture. We provide a venue for members of agriculture and natural resource-based industries, health care facilities, educational institutions, economic and community development organizations, for-profit and nonprofit corporations, and government agencies to cross traditional boundaries, share information, and address in a holistic way the special needs and opportunities in Rural Maryland.

The Council administers the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF). RMPIF

provides targeted investment to promote economic prosperity in Maryland's traditionally disadvantaged and underserved rural communities. By sustaining efforts to promote rural regional cooperation, facilitating entrepreneurial activities and supporting key community colleges and nonprofit providers, the quality of life in rural Maryland can be advanced over the next several years. RMPIF also supports the RMC's activities and MAERDAF, which provides capacity-building funds to rural nonprofit service providers.

The Council reviewed and quantified the Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 grantee reports to identify outcomes, outputs and impacts. As a result of this work, the Council identified the need for a grants administration database to assist in collecting data from RMC grantees. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Council deployed an online grants portal that will greatly facilitate the application, decision making and reporting processes.

In Fiscal Year 2019, the Council will begin reporting on four additional measurements under the Managing for Results application. These will include: number of individuals served, number of services provided, number of research reports or tools created, and number of loans made as a result of RMC grants.

We thank the budget committees for their support of RMC, RMPIF and MAERDAF. Please let us know if you have any questions or need any additional information by contacting our Executive Director Ms. Charlotte Davis at (410) 841-5774 or charlotte.davis@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scott Warner", with a stylized, flowing script.

Scott Warner

Chair

Rural Maryland Council

REPORT ON RURAL MARYLAND COUNCIL'S RMPIF/MAERDAF PROGRAMS
AUGUST 2019

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Maryland Legislature passed legislation extending the authorization of the **Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)** to address economic disparities across the state's rural regions. Administered by the Rural Maryland Council (RMC), the Fund first received a state General Fund appropriation in Fiscal Year 2017. The fund has supported a wide range of community-driven strategic investments to promote economic prosperity in Maryland's disadvantaged and underserved rural communities. This report highlights the outcomes and impact that RMPIF investments have made across the state's rural communities.

The Rural Maryland Council convenes ad hoc issues committees and a statewide grant review committee to drive decisions about RMPIF investments. Surveys of the general public and reviews of regional needs assessments support investment decisions. As outlined under Maryland State Statute (Article – State Finance and Procurement, Section 2-207), the Fund supports a range of strategic activities for investments including:

- **Entrepreneurship** – incubators, accelerators, small business development programs and revolving loan funds – to grow local businesses and create new jobs.
- **Infrastructure** – funds water and wastewater improvements to meet Watershed Improvement Plans and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) environmental goals, enhanced roads to improve transportation and increased access to broadband to improve communications across rural areas.
- **Health Care** – improved access to medical, dental and behavioral health services, recruiting healthcare workforce to rural areas and creating new solutions to improve health outcomes.
- **Regional Planning** – technical assistance to each regional council for economic development, capitalizing revolving loan funds and providing transportation coordination
- **Community Development** – funds for agricultural education and leadership development, and enhanced capacity of rural nonprofit organizations and towns.
- **Education** – supporting a wide range of educational programs including agricultural, environmental and workforce training as well as community colleges.

These strategic investments have improved the quality of life in rural Maryland, creating jobs, access to health and mental health care and have upgraded rural infrastructure. Program

outcomes include a more educated, healthier and economically stronger rural population that will generate growing tax revenues for the state. RMPIF investments are designed to leverage significant non-state funding.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

The Council began this report by reviewing all Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 reports submitted by RMPIF and MAERDAF awardees. The following list of outcomes and outputs reported by grantees was developed.

Grants that supported **Healthcare** activities:

- Patient engagement – number of services, outreach calls, intakes, assessments
- Transportation provided/rides provided
- Number of new positions –people served
- Tech – new equipment purchased, number of people trained to use it, number of patients engaged with it
- Non-tech equipment – hoists and vehicles
- Number of investments in capacity – accreditation, electronic health records, telemedicine equipment
- Education – issues, number of people trained/train the trainers/total numbers educated
- Community Clinics – number of patients, in how many locations, number and type of services offered there, number of hospital readmissions
- Dental – number of services/patients/dentures purchased
- Behavioral Health – number of services/patients/people educated
- Dollar value of investments in facility upgrades
- People engaged, educated, trained, and served
- Number of Community Health Workers trained/placed/number they served
- Number of healthy lifestyle change participants (breast cancer, stop smoking)
- Number of participants in support groups
- Number of investments in educational materials/interactive websites
- Number of people and students introduced to healthcare workforce opportunities

Grants that supported **Economic Development** activities:

- Number of new jobs created
- Number of new businesses created
- Number of new products created
- Number of new incubators created
- Innovation (F³ Tech Accelerator programs)

- Supporting new industries (aquaculture)
- Dollar amount of investments in capital and equipment
- Entrepreneurship – number of people introduced to it, trained people
- Number and types of outreach and recruitment – job fairs, etc.
- Number and amounts of loans made
- Workforce training – number of sessions and participants
- Leadership development – numbers of people who participated
- New engagement strategies that increase tourism (geocache trail)

Grants that supported **Agricultural and Workforce Education** activities:

- Number of education events, new courses created
- Number of people trained
- Investments in capital items such as vehicles to improve access and equipment such as museum equipment and buildings, tractor with front-end loader, off-road utility vehicle and trailer, multi-purpose building, wet lab, high tunnel, mobile career center, video equipment, job centers,
- Create new positions for volunteer coordinator, fellowship
- Range of participants – adults, professions, youth, incarcerated people, ag education projects, veterans, non-native speakers, entrepreneurs, warehouse employees

Grants that supported **Infrastructure** investments:

- Pounds of nutrients reduced that enter regional waterways (connect to WIP and TMDL goals)
- Number of households connected to the internet, and number of communities who have created system engineering and timeline to connect rural communities to broadband
- Dollars of capital investment in public facilities (mental health centers, laundromats, waste water treatment, mapping of utilities, museums)
- Dollars of capital investment in transportation technology as well as vehicles for populations needing access and/or emergency vehicles

Grants to the **Regional Councils**:

- Dollars of Investments in regional facilities
- Agricultural projects that improve efficiencies and reduce runoff
- Improve regional education systems
- Workforce development and training projects
- Capacity building and technical assistance (e.g. GIS Circuit Rider program)

- Marketing efforts (Eastern Shore Harvest Directory, Shore Gourmet)
- Creation of economic development plans
- Dashboards created and modified
- Studies created and executed (housing quality studies, DelMarVa index)
- Number of marketing tools created – tourism videos, websites, FAM tour, podcasts, and webinars

Other grants:

- Number of household improvements in weatherization and preservation
- Dollars of investments in data tracking systems (SP, HMIS)

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT/OUTCOME MEASUREMENT STRATEGY:

After the first two years of the program, it was clear that the range of different types of projects made outcome measurement across programs challenging, and the large number of grants required a system for tracking outcomes beyond spreadsheets. Grantees provided both interim and final financial and narrative reports, yet there were significant differences in what grantees did and did not report, even when asked for specific information. With counsel from a number of Maryland foundations and the Department of Budget and Management, the Council purchased *Foundant*, a grants management software system in 2019. This simplifies the grant application and reporting process for grantees, and makes outcome measurement consistent across programs.

The new grants management system allows applicants to apply for funding online, reducing paper resources and allowing for better accessibility for all users. It will also streamline the reporting structure, ensuring that all grantees answer every report question. Most importantly, it will allow the Council to measure outcomes consistently in order to determine the impact of the programs across the state.

After analyzing grantees' final 2017 and 2018 reports, and with assistance from the Department of Budget and Management and the grant review committee, the Council identified a consistent set of outcomes to measure success of the programs. These measures were presented to the grant review committee and stakeholder groups for recommendations, and were finalized in June, 2019. The outcome measures that were selected to be required in future RMPIF and MAERDAF final reports include:

- Number of jobs created
- Number of individuals served
- Non-state funding leveraged
- Hours of instruction

- Research tools created
- Capital investment made
- Number of services provided
- Number of loans made

The outcome measures that were selected to be added to the *Managing For Results* metrics include:

- Number of individuals served
- Research tools created
- Number of services provided
- Number of loans made

While the final outcome data is incomplete – some final reports have not yet been submitted – any grantee organization that does not report is ineligible for future funding. In an effort to support rural organizations that may have limited resources, the Council works to accommodate special situations that may result in unexpected project timelines or reporting. In some cases, unforeseen circumstances forced the extension of project timelines. In several cases, funds were not used and were returned to the Council. Every effort is made to support the individual needs of grantees, while ensuring the integrity of the RMPIF and MAERDAF programs’ value for Maryland taxpayers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2019 RMPIF INVESTMENTS:

The ***Frederick Innovative Technology Center*** encourages technological innovation and the development of early stage biotechnology, information technology and renewable energy start-up companies. Since its inception, the Center has served over 120 companies, which helped create some 500 jobs and revenue of \$27.2 million. Their community accelerator program is cohort-based, and includes early seed investment, connections, mentorship and education, and culminates in a public pitch event to accelerate growth. Over 650 hours of instruction supported fourteen new tech businesses.

The City of Crisfield’s aging sewer and wastewater collection system was inspected and repaired, reestablishing the full hydraulic capacity of the sewer. Sewer overflows have been eliminated, providing both financial and environmental benefits to the citizens of Crisfield.

Seniors and people with disabilities in three Southern Maryland counties have significantly enhanced transportation opportunities due to the ***Arc Southern Maryland’s*** two new vehicles, a mobile app and a Medical Mobility Manager. Over 121 rides per month reduced medical “no-shows” by over ten percent, improving the health and wellness of this vulnerable rural population.

Capital improvements to seven of the ***Benedictine School for Exceptional Children's*** group homes on the Mid-Shore addressed health, safety and handicapped-accessibility concerns for both adults and students with developmental disabilities.

Regional Councils created new meat and seafood guides highlighting local foods, supported an oyster trail website and brochure, redesigned and updated the Maryland FarmLINK website, coordinated and expanded regional multi-modal transportation infrastructure, held job fairs, upgraded a mobile career center, provided workforce training to pre-release inmates and provided professional development opportunities. Technical and financial support was provided for the rural entrepreneurial ecosystem, niche crops and value added products were produced and marketed, GIS tools were developed to support family farms and an online repository and data visualization tool was created to function as a comprehensive data source for demographic, economic, geographic and social data for the Eastern Shore. Summer youth employment programs, leadership development programs, regional marketing projects, and a new revolving loan fund were created on the Lower Shore.

RMPIF also funds **MAERDAF** (Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund) grant awards that support small and agricultural businesses with enhanced training and technical assistance and rural nonprofits that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education.

Forty-three **MAERDAF** awards in 2019 funded projects ranging from agriculture education, placement of AmeriCorps volunteers, dental services, restorative justice projects, job skill training and twenty new jobs across rural Maryland.

\$2,316,829.55 in 2019 RMPIF investments enhanced life in rural MD through:

- 657 new full time jobs.
- 18,755 individuals served.
- 5,406 hours of instruction.
- \$1,147,389 in capital investment.
- Services to 124,099 rural Marylanders.
- Leveraged \$5,891,531 in non-state funds.

2019 MAERDAF HIGHLIGHTS

An investment in the renovation of the Hope and Healing Center at ***Compass Regional Hospice*** in Centreville. The Center will be home for grief counselors and a chaplain that support 900 families through grief each year.

Support for ***Health Partners*** in Charles County increased dental coverage at two clinics and funded a new dental billing coordinator to process claims and increase efficiencies.

Preservation Maryland educated rural communities across the state on using historic preservation as a tool to stimulate revitalization and new investments in rural communities.

The **Maryland State Library for the Blind and Handicapped** created accessible STEAM programs across 15 Maryland counties, supporting 1200 blind and disabled children along with their parents and caregivers.

In Western Maryland, the **Fort Ritchie Community Center** created one full-time and four part-time positions, retained 3 part-time positions and brought in a dollar-for-dollar match to support the Junior Job Skills Training Program. This program provided students with real-world workforce training, that many reported having never learned about before.

In Western Maryland, workforce training at **Garrett College** was enhanced with investments in equipment needed to train commercial truck drivers, supporting industry needs in Washington, Garrett and Allegany counties. **Allegany College's** new machining equipment allowed for the expansion of its machining program to train 15 new machinists annually, meeting demands of the manufacturing sector in the same region. Every student who graduated from that program has been hired in the industry.

Mid-Shore Pro Bono's restorative justice programming diverts youth from the juvenile justice system and teaches conflict resolution and communication skills. The organization has grown to provide low-income families with civil legal services in all nine Eastern Shore counties.

The **Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts** raised awareness about mental health issues, addiction, depression and suicide to those working with farmers across the state.

Tourism in Frederick was enhanced in the **Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area** through the development of a Visitor Experience Plan, new exhibits and trained volunteers at the Newcomer House in Keedysville, Maryland.

2018 RMPIF HIGHLIGHTS

The Chestertown Business Campus – an \$80 million, 80-acre development that will is expected to generate as much as \$46 million in economic development. RMPIF funds covered the road construction on the campus.

The Asian American Center of Frederick is a leader in the state creating a trained Community Health Workforce through regional partnerships in Western Maryland. A diverse, culturally-competent and bilingual workforce of Community Health Workers is creating access to health education and health care across the region.

The **Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center's** F³ Tech (Farm-Fish-Food) Initiative brings technology and farm-food-fish industries together for ideas, solutions and innovations in response to industry problems. Accelerator projects and incubators provide mentorship as startups test and validate new products, discover new markets and target their customers. This initiative is state-wide.

The University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center launched a tele-psychiatry service for behavioral health patients seeking help in the Emergency Department. This gives people with mental health or substance abuse crises access to a psychiatrist during their crisis, not weeks or months later.

Two new vehicles assisted **Totally Linking Care** in Lanham to provide 793 specialty rides to rural Marylanders with physical disabilities who are unable to get into or out of vehicles without highly specialized and customized supports.

Energetics Technology Center established two incubators to develop and nurture tech start-ups focusing on commercialization of military intellectual property. RMPiF funding supported dedicated, early stage technology transfer and entrepreneurial ecosystem development aligned with government projects and opportunities.

\$2,627,673 in 2018 RMPiF projects enhanced life in rural Maryland through:

More than 19 new jobs created, 13 new small businesses and 138 entrepreneurs trained.

Over 1,700 health care sessions of counseling, grief support, case management and suicide prevention to youth and adults.

Ninety-one locations connected by fiber and 2 new public facilities built.

Leveraged an additional \$2,056,621 in non-state funding investments.

2018 MAERDAF HIGHLIGHTS

Atlantic General Hospital worked with food banks to ensure that healthy meals were available to all and stationed nurses at the top ten busiest food banks and a homeless shelter on the Lower Eastern Shore. Nurses conducted basic health screenings, made referrals and provided health education to the highest users of food pantries and homeless families.

Preservation Maryland created a statewide campaign to support community development, revitalization and economic activity in Maryland's rural historic communities. From small town halls to trainings, workshops, webinars and advertising campaigns, public awareness was raised across the state and professionals trained in historic preservation and community development.

Facility upgrades at the ***Chesterwye Center and the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts*** allowed both organizations to leverage outside funds to upgrade their buildings. This enables people with physical disabilities in Stevensville to live independently in the community, and visitors from across the country to enjoy fine art in Washington County.

Habitat Choptank provided repair services to 78 Mid-Shore families, created a new tracking system and recruited and trained 24 new volunteers to sustain growth in their neighborhood revitalization program.

2017 RMPIF HIGHLIGHTS

Economic Development – Thirteen different projects supported the creation of dozens of new small businesses and 68 new jobs. Innovation and acceleration projects launched new products and leveraged new markets. New industries ranging from aquaculture to high tech manufacturing are resulting in higher paying opportunities for rural residents.

Infrastructure – New broadband access was created throughout two rural towns, and an enhanced wastewater system improved water resources for 703 homes and 40 businesses.

Healthcare – Eight different projects improved access to crisis hotlines, provided discharge clinics to reduce hospital readmissions, supported mental health first aid & suicide prevention, developed a new health access point and supported housing for medical students to experience rural healthcare job opportunities.

Regional Councils – Geographic Information Systems (GIS) dashboards have been designed and created for agricultural projects that support data analysis for family farms. New health and educational dashboards provide access to critical health and education data for anyone to examine, track and evaluate outcomes across jurisdictions. Regional Councils supported job fairs, revolving loan funds, and small business marketing resources.

\$1,320,643 in RMPIF investments in 2017 improved the quality of life in rural Maryland through:

68 new jobs.

31 new businesses.

Healthcare education for over 250 rural Marylanders.

New access to broadband for 3 rural towns.

Over 1,100 jobseekers met with 72 employers at job fairs.

3 new GIS dashboards created to serve farmers, healthcare and education.

Leveraged an additional \$3,037,125 in investments in rural Maryland.

Forty-two **MAERDAF** awards in 2017 supported a range of projects from healthcare to vocational training, environmental education, volunteer and leadership training, environmental and forestry education, a poultry symposium, tourism projects, training for historic home owners and supported accreditation of a behavioral health organization.

2017 MAERDAF HIGHLIGHTS

Investment in a new ***Southern Maryland Oyster Trail Initiative*** brought together 18 partners (farmers, museums, watermen, state) to launch a trail to support both economic development and tourism in Southern Maryland.

Support for Frostburg's ***Evergreen Heritage Center's*** high tunnel greenhouse, heritage wood shop and STEM Outdoor Learning Pavilion helped the agricultural education and historic preservation organization to prominence that resulted in the achievement of a sustainable growth award.

The ***Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area*** created a historic geocache trail to inspire geocache enthusiasts to learn about Civil War history while encouraging economic development through promoting tourism in Carroll, Washington and Frederick Counties. The combination of history and economic development earned that group an award.

Chesapeake College's new Agriculture AAS program received funds for a high tunnel hoop house, giving students skills and knowledge to succeed in the agriculture industry.

For All Seasons Behavioral Health and Rape Crisis Center used MAERDAF funds to leverage a foundation grant to achieve its first ever three-year accreditation.

Frederick's Career and Technology Center, in partnership with its Community College, offers dual enrollment allowing students to combine production education with business skills to support emerging markets such as beekeeping and cut flowers.

The ***Harry R. Hughes Agro-Ecology Center*** used MAERDAF funding to create a day-long Poultry Symposium for 120 people in the industry, addressing needs of the growers, environmental issues and future concerns.

Six different organizations purchased vehicles to transport people with disabilities, youth, and rural Marylanders across remote regions where public transportation doesn't exist.

LEAD Maryland identifies and trains leaders for agriculture, natural resources and rural communities. The two-year program creates cohorts of 20-25 leaders, equipping them with the knowledge to solve problems, identify resources, engage and educate others and shape public policy that impact rural communities.

The **Queen Anne's County Public Library's 'Guys Read'** project brought 24 male volunteers to team up with 4th and 5th grade boys for lunchtime reading sessions, promoting reading as a fun activity. This project has changed boys' attitudes about reading at a critical time in their development.

Farming 4 Hunger provided hands-on job training for 16 incarcerated men and works with local employers to provide a second chance for the men once outside of the justice system, and on-farm education for hundreds of schoolchildren.

LESSONS LEARNED

Performance Management – One funded project experienced so many delays in implementation that the Council requested that those grant funds be returned. Successful projects must be 'shovel-ready' to succeed. Another organization discovered that they could achieve their goals using fewer funds than anticipated, and returned a portion of their grant to the Council. Active performance management ensures that funds are spent efficiently.

Program Design – Well-designed programs using strong outcome measurement strategies show both qualitative and quantitative outcomes. Poor outcome tracking results in a lack of evidence that the project had a positive impact. Evaluation strategies must be thought-out and relevant to understanding outcomes. This challenge resulted in the creation of a new reporting system that tracks both qualitative and quantitative program results.

Timeline Constraints – Timelines for infrastructure projects often outlast annual grant periods. Installing fiber broadband in small towns can take years to execute, as was learned by the **Town of Myersville**. Health Care projects too, can take years to show results. Yet early investments to build capacity have high long-term value to rural communities.

Project Expectation – Supporting the development of new industries takes time, but can have significant long-lasting results. Example – the wet lab investment at the **Eastern Shore Innovation Center** has resulted in a promising new business gaining a multi-year, multi-million-dollar contract that will provide sustainable new tech jobs in one of the state's poorest rural counties.

Integration – GIS systems and dashboards initiated in one sector (health, for example) can be integrated with other sectors (education) for a much wider and deeper impact for those studying rural outcomes across sectors and developing new programs.

Sustainability – "Train the Trainer" projects deliver long-term educational value to rural communities training different groups each year. Additionally, most grantees reported actively seeking ongoing funding to meet the goals of their projects. Investing in capacity development

such as in *For All Seasons Inc.'s* electronics health record will impact the mental health and rape crisis needs of five Mid-Shore counties for years into the future.

MEASURING FOR RESULTS

The Council in Fiscal Year 2019 submitted the following metrics:

- Rural Population
- Rural per capita income
- Number of grant applications received
- Private sector dollars leveraged for rural development projects
- Number of attendees at biennial Rural Summit
- Rural unemployment rates
- Rate of broadband access in rural communities
- Health care providers per 100K rural population

After review of the FY2017 and FY2018 RMPIF and MAERDAF grant reports and discussions with various affiliated entities, the Council adopted four additional measurements to be added to the Managing For Results metrics reported to the Maryland Department of Budget and Management and the Maryland Department of Legislative Services:

- number of individuals served
- number of services provided
- number of research reports or tools created
- number of loans made

In Fiscal Year 2019, all grantees were required to report on all MFR metrics where appropriate.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Charlotte Davis

Executive Director

Rural Maryland Council

50 Harry S Truman Parkway

Annapolis, Maryland 21769

(410) 841-5774

Charlotte.davis@maryland.gov

The Rural Maryland Council offers our thanks and gratitude to Governor Hogan, the budget committees and the legislators of the Maryland General Assembly for their support of the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund.